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The Automobile

AN automobile meet is in perfect accord with the modern world's ways. Speed is the modern world's watchword. "How long will it take?" is the most used of modern world's expression. Nothing can exceed an automobile race in interest, except to steal the bird's prerogative and fly. Nothing else can awaken the interest of both the business man and the hoodlum, like the automobile. There is a spice of danger in running it, an exhilaration about its movements; it is a mighty time saver,—it is doing something.

When the first steamboats were seen on western rivers, boiler-making and testing had not reached a scientific basis. Many a man and woman were shy about trusting their lives aboard of them. But if a rival boat came along and seemed by its actions to be challenging for a race, it was wonderful how quickly men and naturally nervous women lost their fears and went wild in their desire to run away from that other boat. Everybody has heard the old story of the northern man who had loaded his hams and bacon on a down-going steamer to find a market in a southern port. He superintended the loading, was most careful to select the best place on the boat, and to cover carefully his cargo, that it might reach a market in perfect form. But a race with another boat came on, and it was a neck and neck race for many minutes. But finally the other boat began to draw slowly but surely ahead. The careful man watched and finally went to the engineer and asked why he could not beat the other boat. The engineer explained that he had nothing but green wood to burn, and could not make steam fast enough. The shipper went to the rail and watched. The other boat was surely drawing away from the one he was on. The man drew a memorandum book from his pocket and studied the items. Going back to the engineer he said: "Would some hams and bacon in your furnace help your speed?" The reply was that they would, decidedly. "All right," said the man. "Here is what my wife told me to buy, but we can get along without these things. Set your roustabout to feeding the furnaces on my cargo!"

It was done and the race was won, but how the man settled with his wife was never known. Ben Hur's chariot race set half a dozen men to importing Arabian horses. Ask any jockey and he will tell you the name of every great race horse that has been produced in this country for the past forty years.

Ask any English stable boy what year Blair

Athol won the derby and he will reply correctly without a second's hesitation. When the Germans after 1872 began to build ships, the men of England smiled. But when in thirty years they built three faster and finer ships than England ever had, then the whole United Kingdom was aroused and never rested until the government loaned the Cunard company \$10,000,000 to build two ships to be faster than any ship that Germany had.

Speed counts for everything and hence the wonderful success of the automobile. Hence the reckless driving of them by amateurs who know nothing of mechanics, nothing of centrifugal or centripetal forces, or the effects of striking even small objects at great speed. These things all have to be, but they will be regulated after a while. Meanwhile, the automobile is steadily gaining its way and its uses are being multiplied until by and by, and soon too, it will be held as indispensable to this old working world.

Some Things Should Be Improved

CONGRESS and the state legislatures are spending a vast amount of time in the investigation of the affairs of public officers, and of trusts that have drawn to themselves so much wealth, and have hedged themselves around with so much power, that they are well-nigh omnipotent. We suspect there is no other present way to handle these things, but there ought to be. If the laws are sufficient to meet all these perplexing questions, then the courts ought to be enough to dispose of them. That is what the courts were intended to do, while congress and state legislatures have their own fields to work in, and there is enough for them to do. If the court procedure could be simplified and multiplied, conflicting rules and precedents eliminated, a world of time could be saved, time which is now consumed in beating the air and confusing courts and juries. The theory is that the law is an exact science. If it is, it certainly was never created on technicalities, and does not have to be taken apart and reconstructed, like an old watch every time it gets out of repair. When a simple case where the law is all plain and all the facts can be readily obtained never should occupy a court week after week until court and bar are exhausted and the brains of juries are addled.

Then a good many laws should be revised, especially the laws governing taxation, for it is notorious that at present the richer a man or company is the less taxes he or it pays. This is not only an injustice, but it is a source of endless irritation to the poor, and to people moderately well off. This is the cause of most of the discontent with the Aldrich-Payne tariff. There is in it no clear distinction between necessities and luxuries, no clear distinction between articles that come in competition with American labor and between other articles that in the hands of shrewd manufacturers, can, indirectly, be brought into direct competition with American products. We cannot believe that the manipulators who formed the tariff were ignorant of the effects that would follow, but rather that one object which they had in mind was to be sure to secure a generous campaign fund when it should be needed. As to luxuries and necessities, it may be a great luxury for a man or woman who depends upon manual labor for support to have costly wearing apparel, but that is a necessity to the

man or woman whose business it is, in one form or another, to mix daily in society or the general business of a city or state.

To tax automobiles from abroad as much as volorem as they originally cost, is good for revenue, but when that tax is so excessive that automobile manufacturers are able to charge all their cars cost, then \$1,000 profit, then another \$1,000 for advertising and for the agent that sells them; then the tariff on the imported machines should be reduced.

No man is in favor who always has a grouch, but to cry out for justice ought to be in order always, hence we say the laws of the states should be revised, the laws of congress should be revised in many ways, and the courts of the country should be so overhauled that ordinary trials should be simple and swift, and made to impress the people, that they will always be safe when they submit a just case to the adjudication of the courts.

Labor Unions And Pensions

THE tendency of trades unions is to level men to make the most competent work man take his place beside the least competent. It is necessarily so. Both work the same hours and receive the same wages; of course, the least competent one receives the same protection from the union and the same pay, and there is no incentive for the alert and skillful one to try to excel the stupid one, for there is no reward for the better service.

Just now some of the great railway companies of the east, the railway and great manufacturing plants, have decided to pension employees when they reach a certain age or a certain term of years' service. This is most humane and it is, moreover, good business. But the right thing would be to keep a daily tab on the efficiency of each employee and regulate the pension by that service, and have employees understand that they would fix their own pensions up to a certain amount. If one man is worth three or five dollars per day to a company and another is worth only one dollar, it is not right, after each has served a company for, say ten or fifteen years, that they should be retired on the same pension, for the pension is for services rendered, and if one has doubled the other in efficiency through all those years, he should receive double the pension of the other. In the higher grades of labor, it is possible to grade wages. Thus the ordinary editor may receive \$7 per week, while in his life-time Lord Tennyson could command \$100 per line; a great lawyer may command \$100,000 for his services in a case while Mr. Luke will work hard for a week to collect \$12 from a debtor and be satisfied with half of it, but those things could not be if they belonged to the same union. A pension should be founded on absolute justice.

He Had His Reasons

THE dispatches a few days ago cited the fact, as a precedent, that when the trial of Aaron Burr was going on, and a letter, deemed important by the prosecution, which was in the hands of President Jefferson, was demanded, that personage refused to surrender it, holding that the president of the United States could not be reached by any civil process under the government. That is doubtless good law, but, in the case cited, we suspect that Jefferson had other reasons than those